DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 058 920 LI 003 452

TITLE	Open Forum; Micropublishing of Government Information (Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D.C., May 27, 1971).
INSTITUTION	Information Industry Association, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	71
NOTE	39p.; (0 References)
AVAILABLE FROM	Information Industry Association, 1025 15th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005 ($3.00)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	Federal Government; *Government Publications; *Microforms; Microreproduction; Printing; *Publishing Industry; Speeches
IDENTIFIERS	Government Printing Office; *Micropublishing

ABSTRACT

The topic of discussion at an Information Industry Association forum on May 27, 1971 was the micropublishing of government information by the Government Printing Office (GPO). Three speakers represented different points of view in considering the implications of a GPO micropublishing program: a librarian's, an information publisher's and a micropublishers. A brief introduction and discussion among the forum attendees are included. (SJ)

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OPEN FORUM

MICROPUBLISHING OF GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

May 27, 1971
Shoreham Hotel
Washington, D. C.

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THE INFORMATION INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
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LI 003 452

40p.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

Henry Powell
Bell and Howell Company
Bethesda, Md.

My name is Henry Powell. I have the distinction of being the Chairman of the Information Industry Association's Task Force on Government Micropublishing. I think I can best explain one of the reasons we are here tonight with the following historical note. At the request of the IIA, I was nominated to be on the GPO Advisory Group on Microform. In his reply to the Association, Mr. Spence said he was pleased to accept this and that he did want to take the occasion to point out that his advisory group was to advise him on technical matters on how to get into micropublishing, not whether to micropublish.

I would like to clear up the implications of that comment. We are not here to discuss whether the government should micropublish or not. When this first started, the IIA took on the position in some peoples eyes of being opposed to government micropublishing at any time and in any form. This is not the case. We are quite pleased that the government is looking to modern technology. We very much want to clear up the impression that we are obstructionists; that we are against it. We are concerned by a number of its implications.

We are concerned that a number of our members could be affected, very directly and very dramatically in their pocket books by the government going into micropublishing if it is not done with all the care and attention that it ought to receive. But beyond that, this Association has goals. One of those is the quality of information handling. I am not just talking about the quality of microimages or the quality of reprography in general, but more specifically, what makes the IIA unique is that we are concerned with what the librarians would call the bibliographic apparatus, the classifier would call indexing or the data processor would call the massaging of information. We are concerned from a larger point of view that it be done right to everyone's best interest. The reason we are here tonight, and the reason the NMA let us have the room is to discuss what does it mean? What does it mean to the people involved? What does it mean to the people in the room? We have asked three gentlemen to give comments on that subject: What does it mean if the government does micropublish and how the government micropublishes? To start off tonight, I'm going to ask Steve McCarthy of the Association of Research Libraries to speak primarily for himself on what the Public Printer's Plans portend for the libraries.

Stephen McCarthy, Executive Director, Association of Research Libraries.

A L I B R A R Y V I E W

Stephen McCarthy
Executive Director
Association of Research Libraries
Washington, D. C.

Thank you, Henry. I think I should say first that I put a title on these notes which reads: "Micropublishing Program for U. S. Government Documents, A Librarian's View." I am the Executive Director of the ARL, but I am not necessarily speaking for the research library community, not to mention the entire library community. I am simply giving my own views and those which have been suggested to me in conversations with colleagues. It is completely unofficial. Nevertheless, I think it is true. (laughter)

I think you all know that Federal Government documents are an important part of library collections. They are of interest and value to many library users. Because of this, librarians are naturally very concerned about the proposed micropublication program of the GPO. In our view, it would seem reasonable that if changes are going to be made the changes at least should not result in any lessening or reduction in the effectiveness of service to readers. Hopefully, any changes that might be introduced would result in improvements. One would suppose that that would be the reason for making the changes.

It is not hard to state in general terms what a satisfactory micro-

publication program of government documents would be as far as libraries are concerned.

Simply stated they would include:

- a microform product of high quality;
- an inexpensive, efficient, and easy to use reader, and reader/printer;
- and a system of cataloging, indexing, and labeling that provides effective and timely bibliographic access and control.

If any of these elements is lacking, the micropublishing program will result in inferior service rather than in improved service.

But our experience in dealing with the microfilm field, as well as, say, the computer field, has taught us that libraries can't just state their needs in general terms. If you do and let it go at that, you are likely to be in for some unpleasant surprises.

To try to look at it a little more closely, our first questions might revolve around the question of availability. These are questions that, at least as far as I know, are not fully answered yet.

1) Under the proposed micropublication program, would deposit libraries have a choice between hard copy in traditional forms and microforms?

2) Could libraries select some documents in one format and some other documents in the other format?

3) Suppose a library made its choices and found out a year later that it had made some mistakes and that it would be better to have certain documents in a different format. Would they be able to make

such a change?

In our view all of these questions should be answered affirmatively. If we turn from this administrative side of the program and consider its elements, we have such questions as the following:

- Will all the documents be put into the same format?
- Will the reduction ratio in all cases be the same?
- What is the proposed reduction ratio?

These questions imply answers. Many experts in the field of microforms take the view that the nature of the material to be put into microform should determine the particular microform format to be used. It appears to be generally accepted that roll microfilm is the best format for newspapers, microfiche the best format for research reports. But the GPO program includes a great variety of publications. Because of that it should not seem unreasonable to us if some differences in format, dictated by the nature of the material, might result.

With respect to the reduction ratio , a reasonable library position would seem to be that the reduction ratio should be high enough to achieve the major space saving capabilities of micropublishing but at the same time the ratio ought to be consonant with the production of a legible and copyable microform product. As you well know, the ratios commonly used and for which most equipment is designed range from 10 or 12 diameters, to 22 or 24. In our judgment, a significant departure from this range is a matter of real concern. We all understand, I think, that the GPO is proposing a reduction ratio of 48x the reason being that this would allow them to have a

1 to 1 relationship; that is, one hard copy title to one fiche. Some of the experienced people in the microform field say that if this reduction ratio is used for all government documents, there are some important government documents, at least parts of which, will be illegible. And one just recently cited is the Executive Budget.

Also, as far as I have been able to find out there is no reader or reader/printer for 48x microfilm. At the meetings that Mr. Spence had, some speaker stated that if GPO announced a micropublication program at 48x the industry would immediately produce suitable readers and reader/printers. We've been down that primrose path many, many times and we are reluctant to start down it again. We've waited for the ideal, the improved reader. It's been announced over and over again and we still haven't got it. We have a serious reservation here. We haven't seen the equipment. We don't know that it will be made and we certainly don't know that it will work when it is made. Even if you could buy a good reader and a good reader/printer for 48x material, the adoption of it would present some problems for libraries.

When I say problems for libraries, I hope you will understand that our concern is the readers. The readers will be the people who will suffer if libraries cannot function effectively and give good service. If the day should ever come when libraries will have not 10 or 20 or 30 or 40 microform readers, but 100,200, 300 or more, then material which can only be used on a particular reader will certainly be a nuisance and it may be a serious burden.

All of the things I have been talking about until now are really in the

nature of the physical requirements. Perhaps, even more important, are the intellectual requirements. When you are dealing with a format which cannot be identified, examined and read with the unaided eye, the requirements for cataloging, indexing, and location of materials on the microform become of the very greatest importance. Mr. Spence has assured us that he has a study underway which will result in a greatly improved cataloging and indexing system. He assures us that this is true. We accept his word, but we would go on to say respectfully that we would like to see it. We would like to have a chance to examine it. We would like to find out whether it will really serve the purpose. Until we do see it, we do not have any choice but to withhold our judgment and keep insisting on the needs.

To sum this up, I'd say that libraries recognize that there are potential advantages in the proposed micropublishing program. But we think that these advantages can be obtained only if the key elements in good library service to users are not sacrificed. Micropublication would have the advantage of saving space in libraries. The microform would be more permanent than the paper on which many government documents are printed. These are things we would welcome, but we don't want to lower the quality of our service and so our position is: Give us a micropublication program for government documents which will at the least maintain the present level of service and hopefully will improve it. Until then we hope no final decisions will be taken.

We are a little bit afraid that maybe they have been. Thank you.

A N I N F O R M A T I O N P U B L I S H E R ' S V I E W

James Adler
Publisher
Congressional Information Services
Bethesda, Md.

Powell: Categorically, that is, I would say a fair statement of some of the user's concerns. One other thing we would like to explore is some producer concerns: the effect on the industry. As a result, we have asked Jim Adler of Congressional Information Service to give you some of his thoughts at least on how it is going to affect him and his service.

Jim Adler: This is one publisher's view. Congressional Information Service is a new company less than 2 years old, which collects, abstracts, indexes and micropublishes some 450,000 pages per year of government documents. Specifically, we handle those documents that are issued by some 300 odd committees and subcommittees of the United States Congress. Approximately 75% of these documents are sent to depository libraries by the GPO. The rest are harder to come by, and most of these non-depository documents are not to be found in the monthly catalog even though they have been printed by the GPO.

Our company is about a year and a half old. We have had some success during our first year and I think what success we have had is based very largely on the exceptionally thorough job of abstracting and

indexing that we do. We have set the bibliographic task as our prime task. Everything else follows from that.

A few months ago, when word first began to filter out about the Public Printer's intentions with regard to micropublishing, I began to hear comments from my friends that went along the lines, "Jim, isn't he going to put you out of business?" This didn't bother me until I began to hear comments from librarians that went along the lines, "Why should I buy microfiche from you when the Public Printer is going to start giving it to me." This began to bother me a bit more. Two months ago, at the annual meeting of the IIA, Mr. Spence, who was the featured speaker, as you know, announced at the Awards Banquet that he had no intention of going into competition with those firms that were already micropublishing government documents. He specifically mentioned the CIS operation as one of those firms which he had no intention of going into competition with. Which, as you can imagine, pleased me no end. Indeed, one might wonder why I'm here instead of out telling the librarians about what for us is such good news.

But the experience of the last few months has led me to a number of thoughts about the proper roles of the government and of private publishers with regard to the dissemination of public information.

I'm going to offer you eight points and one conclusion or recommedation. Point number one is that it seems obvious to me that nobody in private business has been given the right to demand that the field be left clear for us and the government should keep hands off. I think that would be arrogant and foolish. I think we have to recognize that the

government has an important role to play, not only in the production of this information but with regard to its dissemination, as well.

However, and this is point number two. We in the private publishing industry do have a right to some consideration. Not only because we have a right to expect that the government will not damage our already existing private interest, but also because we are in a position to make a positive contribution to the public interest if we are permitted to do so.

My third point is that it is almost a basic part of the way this country is organized and it is certainly a basic premise of mine that the government should not do what private industry can do as well or better. That is not the government's role. Ordinarily the government tries to limit itself to doing those things that private industry can't do or can't do well. I would like to underline "What private industry can do." This includes not only what it is already doing, but also what it would or could do if given adequate opportunity.

My fourth point is that publishing is not the same as printing. It requires skills and creativity of a peculiar nature. GPO is a printer with a long and distinguished track record. It is not, however, the government publishing office. Indeed, the charter which it has makes it virtually impossible for the GPO to function effectively as a publisher. The history of the GPO bears this out. It does not have a distinguished record as a publisher. Private publishing in this country, on the other hand, has a very long and very successful record and has a great deal to contribute to the dissemination of information regard-

less of source.

With regard to the dissemination of information, and particularly the dissemination of information about information, I think it can be fairly said that there is no body of important information existing in this country on which the bibliographic controls are as weak as government documents. The distribution of microforms by the public printer is going to get the public printer into publishing as opposed to printing whether or not he likes it. And I think he should at least be aware of the fact that to a certain extent he may be turning the GPO into the Government Publishing Office.

Point number five is that the economics of micropublishing are different from the economics of hardcopy publishing. In hard copy, important as they may be, government documents represent a relatively small source of all the information which is put into print. It is also true that the document depositories which, after all, are the major customers of the GPO, are a relatively small part, significant, but relatively small part of the overall market for printed information. But when you turn to micropublishing, which is really an infant industry still at the crawling stage, both of these facts are no longer true. The document depositories, or at least the libraries that house them, are an extraordinarily important part of the market. And government documents are an extremely important source of the data. I think that is perhaps largely due to the fact that our market is so small and our industry is so small that we really don't have the resources to go out and develop original information or to pay any large amount of money for the

rights to information that is not already in the public domain. Which means that to get started, the micropublishing industry is going to rely heavily from a marketing standpoint and from an editorial standpoint on document depositories and government documents.

It follows then that what the GPO does with regard to hardcopy is going to have relatively little impact on the economics of the print publishing industry. But in micropublishing, what the GPO does is going to have enormous impact on the industry, whether or not it wants to. If the GPO chooses to jump into this small pool with both feet, a lot of people are going to get splashed.

Point number six is that those of us who feel that government monopolies in any field ought to be avoided where possible, are justified in worrying about the fact that most open market micropublishing seems to be done by the government already. I'm particularily thinking about the ERIC program and the NTIS program. I don't know what percentage of overall micropublishing activity they account for. But they are two very large factors in the overall picture. I would point out that in both cases the job these organizations undertook could not have been done by private industry. Private industry, under any circumstances that I could imagine, could not have launched those programs. It is also true that the people who run both programs have taken great pains to cooperate with private industry. Indeed, the arrangement between ERIC and CCM and LEASCO is evidence of a great deal of creative thinking in terms of partnership between government and private industry.

Another point that should not be overlooked in the case of both of

these programs is that the massive distribution of microfiche followed, rather than preceded the construction of an extensive and reasonably effective bibliographic apparatus. I think to distribute microfiche in quantities without having created the bibliographic apparatus is to put the cart before the horse.

Point number seven addresses itself to the obvious need for such a bibliographic apparatus and the sad fact that the current apparatus that exists for government documents is grossly inadequate. Indeed, if it were anywhere near being adequate, the Congressional Information Service would never have come into existence. I would also comment that the procurement process that the GPO customarily uses to buy printing, which is quite effective for the purchase of printing, is absolutely unsuited for the procurement of bibliographic services. Good indexing, as we have learned the hard way, requires a great deal of professional competence, meticulousness, ingenuity, and effort -- as well as an unwillingness to cut corners even though the temptation may present itself. The job is not mechanical, and anybody who thinks he can buy this kind of demanding and creative work on a fixed-price, low-bid basis is kidding himself. You'll get something that way, but it won't be good indexing.

My eighth point is that we in private publishing are already making a meaningful contribution to the dissemination of public information. One thinks of CCM's work on the ERIC program, of the various producers of information on military specifications, of Readex and Bernan's, of CIS, and of some legal publishers. Everybody in this room knows that

neither micropublishing nor indexing are enormously profitable enterprises -- but I think that most of these private publishers are performing useful functions at a fair price. Further, if the Government were to try to do what we are doing, it would cost the public more -- perhaps for less satisfactory work.

Which brings me to my one suggestion. We are talking about the need for a genuine partnership. There are parts of the overall micropublishing job that only GPO can do. But there are also parts that private industry can do better and more economically. It would not be difficult for GPO to bring private publishers into its planning process -- not merely by having one representative on an advisory committee, but by challenging us to do what needs to be done before the Government is forced to step in and fill the gap. Let GPO identify what it considers the needs to be -- then challenge us, as private publishers, to come up with technically and economically satisfactory solutions. If we fail to do so within a reasonable time, then obviously government must step in to do the job.

This method may take some time. But time is not so short that GPO must jump in with both feet tomorrow.

In any event, the job must be done a step at a time. I am arguing that the steps should be laid out so that the best private initiative is brought to bear on the problems of the information user to everybody's advantage. Indeed, if factors such as those I have mentioned are not adequately considered and the efforts made to meet them evaluated as the program moves along, I'm afraid that the information industry,

the micropublishing industry, the libraries, the public and the government will all suffer.

A M I C R O P U B L I S H E R ' S V I E W

John C. Marken
Vice President and General Manager
Micro Photo Division
Bell and Howell Company
Wooster, Ohio

Powell: Our third speaker is John Marken, Vice President and General Manager, MicroPhoto Division of Bell and Howell.

He brings to the table part of the unique dilemma of the Association. That is, the fact that the Association is made up of diverse organizations. Some of us are publishers. Some of us are just in the microfilm area. Some of us are micropublishers and some of us are what I call microprinters. I'd like to get that distinction started. A micropublisher is someone who puts something on film and asks will anyone buy it, and the microprinter is someone who does the printing for him. The same analogy exists between bindery and a publisher. In Bell and Howell, John Marken's position has to be ambivalent because he is both. Just to make it more complicated we are also an equipment manufacturer. I don't want to preempt anymore of what he is going to say. So, John, the floor is yours.

Marken: It's a pleasure, though it is with a sense of mixed emotion that I address this group. I think Henry put his finger on it in describing the complexity in representing micropublishing, as we have been calling ourselves The Micropublishers. I really think, however,

that we are more microprinters in an industry that has been microprinters for many, many years. Whether we like to think of ourselves in this fashion or not, I think that is really true. I've really only been directly involved as head of the Micro Photo Division for two years, but have been in and around the microfilm business for many years and even before that in the photographic business for many years. I can recall conversations some twenty years ago, which is a long time ago in my life, about the final standardization of film sizes in the movie industry and the kinds of emotion that went into that decision. It is with that in mind that as a microprinter, a micropublisher, and an equipment designer and manufacturer that I agree with most of the points made by the two preceding speakers.

We have one very important thing to consider, as micropublishers of the future, and this is the user. If we don't really start with the user and then back into micropublishing decisions, if the GPO doesn't back into its decisions by trying to think who is going to use their material how are they going to use it, what they are going to use it on, we are all making a big mistake.

Because as Jim Adler says, and I think we all agree, we are really an infant industry in the sense of micropublishing. We are at a plateau is the way I look at it. We have a number of millions of dollars in business each year that we have been able to generate in the library market and more recently the systems market, which we must assume is on a solid foundation if we expect to grow. There has been quite an explosion in this business, but actually quite recently, within the

last 10 to 12 years. Micro Photo has, of course, been a part of this growth including such breakthroughs as being the first contractor for ERIC, making us one of the first people in the United States into microfiche. Since then, we have come to feel very strongly about the microfiche medium as the microform of the future. And yet, obviously, it isn't the only form that micropublishing could take and that adds another dimension to the problem regarding the GPO plan. And, it does seem to be a foregone conclusion in the meetings that I have attended and from what we have discussed between us that microfiche is the major way the industry is going. However, the inference of a 48:1 reduction ratio further compounds an already hectic problem to develop some sort of standards. Speaking simply as a microprinter with a large, very capable laboratory with the ability to turn out high volumes of quality work -- great, this gives us an opportunity to be a bidder and a micro-printer for the GPO.

However, to go along with Jim Adler's point, this doesn't necessarily mean you are going to end up with a quality product, because we are not just talking about microprinting but rather a major micropublishing program.

To assume this there must be good bibliographic control. There should be assurance of this before we even go forward with the program. As microprinters (and micropublishers) with any integrity at all, we must feel this very strongly. I think this is partly why the industry hasn't grown faster than it has over the years. I think the industrial people have learned this as they have installed microform systems having to do

with parts catalogs, field service manuals, or other on line programs. If you don't have good access back into the materials, the old retrieval chestnut, don't bother converting hard copy to microforms. You can argue from now until doomsday what the ratio ought to be, but regardless, there must be a <u>good</u> way to retrieve the information.

Once you retrieve it, of course, you must be able to read it. There are an awful lot of readers on display these days and, of course, we are right in the middle of this reader business ourselves.

The other day we spent several days in very serious, hard-headed forward planning to determine where we want to go, what direction should or will the industry take, how should we help guide the industry, because, we do believe Bell & Howell has something to offer in this whole micro-publishing area. We literally decorated the walls of a large room with photos and samples of all the things going on in the micropublishing business; from the type readers to the type cameras to the type films, to aperture cards, to high reduction fiche, low reduction fiche, you name it. And when you look at it, the varieties and the apparent lack of standardization is a bit staggering.

Again, as microprinters or hardware manufacturers, we have over the years said, "If that's the way you want it, that is the way we will do it." We will meet your requirements. If you want x number of images, we can do it, or conversely, if we find a more economical way of filming or printing -- fine, hopefully, it's the right way for the end user. But, by following this path are we really providing the well-planned, well-thought-out industry effort which is needed to lead

us into a future that is quite dramatic.

Therefore, what stirs me to speak out regarding the GPO proposed program is the potential impact of the government printing operation, should it become as Jim describes it, the government publishing office, its sheer size and magnitude is going to have a dramatic effect on the way the entire industry probably will move.

That can make it a very good thing because it can force us to settle in a direction that we know is going to be good and right. And, as a result, we will come with proper readers and reader/printers. We do this every day in great varieties.

Therefore, we come back again and emphasize that these things can be done as micropublishers, microprinters and manufacturers. But what we have heard from the library community or users in general if you will, is the one I wish the GPO would really pay attention to. Who is going to use their material and how is he going to get to it?

One further point in conclusion is echoing what Jim Adler said at the conclusion of his remarks without knowing that he was going to say it and that is that the private sector should get to work and meet the GPO challenge by offering to do their proposed program ourselves, instead of the government doing it for us. This is the kind of challenge GPO should offer us. And I think we ought to see if we can rise to this challenge and do an adequate job for ourselves and the micropublishing industry that we all can be proud of. So that we will go on to more and much more glamorous, greater horizons than we have attained today in the micropublishing business. We must become

publishers rather than microprinters. We must become people who are user oriented in the most complete fashion possible. This concludes my comments for any discussion that might follow.

D I S C U S S I O N

Powell: Before I ask for comments and questions, I would like to point out that we have disseminated under cover of a letter the results of a very quick survey the Association did at the time this information was first made public. I would commend that to your attention. Also available at the back of the room is a statement prepared for the occasion of the last meeting the Public Printer held to which all of the industry was invited. There is a footnote on here describing very briefly the Information Industry Association for those of you who haven't been around and been through what someone said at Lancaster called our identity crisis. It might be said, does the information industry include book publishers and textbook publishers? I think it does not, as a matter of fact. The essential ingredient this footnote refers to is information control. And that is a very brief way of saying what all three of these gentlemen have mentioned about bibliographic apparatus access. Essentially that the information is not good unless it is available and accessible.

Without belaboring the point any further, since I am supposed to be the chairman, and not one of the principle speakers, I would like

to invite all of you who are new to the meetings of this Association to note that its characteristic is an extremely free and candid exchange of information. And if there are some questions, or any statements anyone would like to make, we'd be happy to entertain individually or collectively.

Earl Coleman: I think it is a shame that we did not have a government speaker or someone representing the Public Printer, because in many ways it could be that we are talking either to ourselves or to a fairly convinced audience. If we are going to carry this message to the proper place, to people who are unconvinced, who probably should have participated, the presentations were extremely well made. But we may be talking just to ourselves.

Powell: Well, this was considered, and as I mentioned earlier, we did get in an awkward position. I'm in a little of an awkward position as a member of the Advisory Group. I know what is going on in the only meeting that has been held so far, but if George Bernstein had spoken or I had spoken, we would have defacto have been preempting what the Public Printer is going to say tomorrow. Which would not only have been unfair, but it would not be very polite. I would behoove all of you to hear what the Public Printer is going to say. A couple of us have an idea what he is going to say and it has very definite effect on what his plans are with respect to what should be examined before a decision is made both in respect to the ratio, users, economics, timing and what have you.

I agree with you and certainly this will come to the Public Printer's attention. Now there are two people who are in the room now who are on his committee. We invited members of the Joint Committee to come to the meeting. And Mr. Haynes who is chairman of the Advisory Group, but even in their absence, they'll hear what happened.

Stevens Rice: I don't know why we have to be a dog in the manger. How many books were published in inkprint last year? Do you know?

Voice: Publishers' Weekly record was about 36,000.

Rice: Well, we published over 30,000 doctoral dissertations alone. Which were original publications. I mean, we are in this kind of business now. That's the point I am trying to make. This is nothing new. We are going further into it. I don't see any problem there. I don't think we need to take the attitude that we're just reprinters. I think we are publishers. I don't know about you, but we are.

Powell: I do think there has been a tendency in this industry, and I'll include my own company, of the tail wagging the dog to the extent that by accident of being a printer, in some cases, we have become a publisher. But in a very real sense, your point is well taken. We are in the publishing business.

Voice: Question, while you're on that. Could someone elaborate very clearly the difference between a printer and a publisher? Other than that you print. Does that mean that you index and promote? Are there things required for you to be a publisher other than that you index

and promote?

Rice: A publisher has two functions. He has to advertise to the public that a work is for sale and then be ready to supply it when somebody wants a copy.

Adler: I've got to dispute that definition. I think that is terribly narrow. I speak from a background of 16 years in the business. I think that a publisher's function is infinitely more complex than that. From a financial point of view, a publisher is somebody who takes the risk to bring something out to the public - the financial risk. From an editorial point of view, the publisher is somebody who creates, or brings into creation, either the editorial material or a new package which just by virtue of the manner in which its been packaged is new enough to take on a life of its own. Part of the responsibility of the publisher is to see that information about what he has packaged, has produced, gets out to enough people to be meaningful. I once worked for a book publisher whose background had been in sales and I was in charge of marketing for him. It was not easy to satisfy the man as you can imagine. When he was particularly dissatisfied with a job we had done with a book he thought should have done better, he would say to me, "Jim, you did not publish that book, you privished it." The job of a publisher contains a number of different facets. Advertising and filling orders is just one of them. The Government Printing Office has for years made available some information about the existence of documents through the mail and in a catalog and has filled orders for those publications. The Superintendent of Documents

has for years denied that that is a publishing operation. And I think he is right. Printing is printing.

Coleman: And one step further on that, as a matter of fact, that very point. Publishers rarely print. They deal with printers who do printing for them. There is an enormous difference between printing which anyone can do (laughter), and publishing.

Jeffrey Norton: Earl's second point brings to mind his first one. Are we talking just to ourselves or to the wall. I don't view with quite the same dismay the fact that we don't have someone to talk at because I hope that one of the things that might evolve from this group this evening would be some constructive suggestions on what the micropublishing industry might do to further as a goal. I would like to see us turn now to what people here might have as specific suggestions as a program or a way of approaching the problem that might perhaps benefit us and might help solve the problem. If so, I would like to hear from them.

Powell: That was Jeff Norton, the President of the Association.

David Lake: Library Resources: Couldn't this discussion have been held 20 years ago, 30 years ago? Really, because it is only the Public Printer deciding to go into microforms which is a new media, a new printing medium, in effect, what we have been trying to say, what all the discussion has centered around is: "What the Government Printing Office really needs is better bibliographic support, better access to

information it publishes, prints,publishes, whichever word you prefer." And going into microfiche; at least as anticipated at the moment, assuming you don't have 60mm and don't have a computer, what we are going to do is take the material we would normally print on paper and print it on microfiche, or both. The point being, if that starts because we are involved in microfiche as private companies, we want to do some of that. But the discussion seems to center around the user viewpoint. The user says, the libraries would like to have more access to the information, or better access, better ways to get at it and so on and so forth. But hasn't that always been a problem?

McCarthy: Yes, but that has been improved over what it was 30 years ago. But it is still far short of what it should be.

Lake: If the Public Printer changed his mind tomorrow and said I'm not going to go into micropublishing, won't the problem we are talking about still exist? It is not that they are going into microforms that creates the problem.

Adler: I've got to dispute that, Dave. Micropublishing is not yet an enormously profitable industry I can also state that indexing is also not an enormously profitable industry. You know the old story, build a better mousetrap and the world will beat a path to your door. It does, but that path does not necessarily get beaten in 24 hours. We have invested a tremendous amount of time and effort to collect documents that were never put in one place before and to do all the bibliographic work that

had to be done in order to come out with the CIS Index. Having done that, we found that we had given economic value to microform versions of those documents we had just indexed. And so we were able to write off the cost of indexing against two products rather than one. And it is the fact that we have got this two ways of making money out of the original effort that makes the whole effort economically worthwhile. Now, if I'm really limited to indexing, because someone else is doing the micropublishing and giving those microprints away, so that I can't sell them and make a profit that is divided among two products, then I am going to do one of two things. Either I am going to raise the cost of my index or I'm going to go out of business. So that is really what I was trying to say before. This is not a consideration, I'm sure that the Public Printer has given much thought to. It's the kind of industry that can be very badly hurt by someone going ahead without giving very serious thought to such considerations.

Harold Weise, from a new company called Microvision,Inc: I would like to raise a question about the specific format that the GPO has proposed. As I understand it by reading the Government Executive, that it is not only going to be 48x but also laminated. I think this is something that should be avoided. One advantage of the present printing effort is the ease of duplication. Libraries can very easily run off copies. This greatly improves the whole micropublishing industry in the dissemination of microfilm. On the other hand, laminated fiche cannot readily be diazo duplicated. What the government should really do is further the dissemination of information by making

it easy for individual libraries to reprint the materials. In particular for the depository libraries to reprint the materials. That is another concern we should have. The Lamination. If the Government Printing Office issues laminated fiche then I think that would greatly hurt the expansion of the micropublishing industry.

Powell: I may be wrong, but I think that at the present, the intention is just the reverse. It is to make fiche as duplicatable as possible. Also the ratio as I understand is not set at 48x.

McCarthy: But he hasn't mentioned any other reduction ratios so that this is the one you keep seeing.

Adler: He has been talking about the smorgasbord of ratios.

Lake: But when you do get to the higher reduction ratios, you almost have to laminate for protection. You have to treat each fiche as a master, because you scratch a 48x or 60x fiche, and you lose half a page.

Marken: Another reason and a very interesting point, and one of ownership and again one that relates to publishing. If its information in the public domain that you don't own and you put it out on a microfiche that is readily duplicated, it certainly limits your ability as a private enterprise outfit to make a buck on it. And that plagues you as a publisher all the time. If you own the information or have some way of owning it, (I think Norton has spent a lot of time thinking this one through too) what to do about copyright, but that's a very

complex problem, but not necessarily one that is a problem of the end user. It is more the problem of the private entrepreneur.

Jeff Norton: Is there anything in your objectives that are consistent with our objectives?

McCarthy: It seems to me, and you'll pardon me for saying this, Jeff, that maybe the industry is a little too frightened. There are a number of enterprises which have taken government documents in the past and have seen that there are certain things that they can do with them, to them, or about them which would be useful to a certain group. They thought this out, the government printer didn't. The people who wrote the depository law didn't. Readex came along with its program of microprinting, Jim developed his indexing and microfiche program. We all know the services which are essentially reproductions of portions of government documents, rearranged, reworked, massaged, CCH, that kind of thing. I would suggest what we could use is some imaginative approaches to the problem. What are the things the library community, the research community, the education community need that are not well supplied by the GPO program. I'm confident that you people will find those.

Coleman: You're right. But there is a problem. The problem as it seems to me is that the impact of so large a government program has to be very substantial. Now, it seems to me that we talk frequently, perhaps too frequently, about making a buck and the financial impact

of this. The fact is the public would not be advantageously served best for the following reasons: If one went with a group that literally did not study this sufficiently, did not research this sufficiently, which has vague ideas about what they want to do, which has a proven record of poor dissemination, etc., who nevertheless is going to get into this field with an impact. Then it can't work for the benefit of the entrepreneur. It can't work for the benefit literally of the users, because the publishing brains that figure out these packages, etc., are going to be practically stopped in their tracks precisely because of the impact of this enormous program. That's really where it lies.

Powell: Let me throw out a question. Since we all know the GPO prints documents of all sizes, shapes and colors for all sorts of purposes, gigantic charts and pictures. What about the possibility of the GPO microprinting or micropublishing in a combination of media? What are the ramifications of that? The whole bag, 16mm, 35mm, cartridge, fiche, aperture cards.

Mark Levine- Readex: There is nobody I guess in this country who has had the experience we have had in reproducing in microform the vast output of the GPO. Printed and published both. About 2 million pages per year. We have been doing it for about 17 years. So we have a pretty large backlog of knowledge, we also have a pretty big backlog of products. The backlog doesn't bother us so much since we don't expect the GPO to go back. But certainly we know what the problems are.

I've been a little bit amused by the questions about whether or not multiple reduction ratios will be required or not. The answer is, of course, they are. There is really no question at all about it. If the large gamut of materials put out by GPO is to be covered by them, there will be a number of different ratios. There just is no other way to do it. If you take a look at some of the 2 point weather reports that they put out. We try to microform that stuff and we almost had to do it one to one in order to get it to come out. I think that whole discussion has a touch of the ludicrous to it. That really all goes down to the point that Jim Adler made in the very fine statement he made on behalf of himself and the industry. The point here is that publishing these materials requires creativity in many, many aspects. We have failed at various times over the years to exercise enought creativity. We constantly try to erase those failures, but it requires the constant application of some creativity. And creativity will not be engendered within the private sector merely by having the GPO through its committee establish a form or a series of forms for micropublishing and putting it out for bid and awarding it to the lowest bidder to meet the specifications.

What you get is what you asked for, the lowest bidder who can meet those specifications. And the creativity aspect disappears. I think we all know that the risk taking of the private sector is what engenders the creativity of the publishing industry. While Mr. Spence in response to a question I asked him said that it was important for GPO to show a profit at the end of the year. Unless he does, he faces

a year in jail and a five thousand dollar fine. But they have more ways in the government to work with the figures than we do. So the risk taking on their part in the government is very much less, if any, compared with the private sector. And I don't think the creativity we're talking about will come out as a result.

The only other point I would like to make is that the program of micropublishing requires a great deal more than printing. All these years we find that the GPO has not created the bibliographic controls that are really needed. And I wonder here whether there is any reason for us to expect this to be part of this program just because the medium they are going to publish on is going to change. There is nothing in the conversations to date to prove that that is going to happen. The best result will be if the GPO, along with the library groups, sets up some goals and throws it out for the private sector to meet.

McCarthy: I thought that Mr. Spence said at one of those meetings at which I raised the question of bibliographic controls that he had a big study on bibliographic control that was to bring him in recommendations. Did any of the rest of you hear that?

Adler: I have heard a number of descriptions of that. We were one of the firms which bid on that contract and which proposal was accepted. We withdrew from the competition when we went down to the GPO and discovered that their view of what appropriate bibliographic standards were, was so widely at a variance with ours. I guess you can use, say

"machine readable," "machine retrievable," "bibliographic techniques," and mean a lot of things.

Levine: I just threw in the comment to suggest that they had not proven to us that they really meant it.

McCarthy: Well, they shut me off pretty fast.

Levine: They shut a number of people off for a meeting that was there to gather comment and advise.

Powell: The original intent of that was an inhouse system.

Adler: Yes, that is true. I don't know whether it is worthwhile going into the details of it. But it would create a machine readable base but it could be used to drive a Linotron and create catalog materials. They proposed to do all of this without doing any indexing.

Voice: Have you heard whether there is any communication between GPO and other government agencies already in this business, like NTIS for example, where they have packaged bibliographic information?

Powell: There has been a good bit of communication, both calm and otherwise.

Norton: Has there been communication between GPO and the agencies it serves; agencies which are themselves not publishing in microform?

Powell: Like the Congress, the Libraries?

Norton: Like the executive agencies which have responsibilities to disseminate information. Have they been given a chance to participate?

Powell: Can I pass the buck to Peter Urbeck of NTIS. Do you know, Peter?

Urbeck: Quite a number were invited to the first meeting.

Powell: That's right. The February 25th meeting was largely for government agencies.

Voice: What percent of that which the government printer produces is primarily for consumption of the government itself? He does most of the forms for government offices. A great percent of what he does is for the government. The distribution of what he does for outside uses is irrelevant.

Powell: What he would micropublish would be of wider interest.

McCarthy: Yes, and the depository libraries are only part of the library group. There are others who use these documents as well.

Adler: Steve, there is one thing I did not hear you say among all the considerations that you mentioned. You didn't say you were concerned that you could get this material free.

McCarthy: Well, I didn't want to get into that argument. Depository libraries are really serving the government at the same time that they serve themselves.

Adler: I have heard it said, and I believe it to be true, that government documents are the most expensive gift that a library receives. Nonetheless, my question is if the ARL libraries which are the richest academic libraries in the country, at least used to be, feel this strongly about the quality of the product, do they feel strongly enough so that they would prefer to pay for a system which gives them these qualities, as opposed to receiving for nothing just a lot of microfiche which permits them to throw out hardcopy and permits them to be within the bounds of the library law?

McCarthy: I think I understand your question. Readex has had many subscriptions, many from depository libraries. You have had many subscriptions. So have the various services. If there is something that constitutes a real service to their readers and if it is within their budgetary constraints, libraries will buy it, but I think they would be more hesitant to have the depository privilege withdrawn or to have to be made to pay a price.

Norton: At the same time I have been brooding on the possible extension of some of the principles that have been discussed. If, indeed, after 120 years of publishing, if the government decided to extend information in a second medium, it suggests that video tape would be a better medium. If it is better, shouldn't it be considered now rather than wait for another period of time to pass? If we open the door and agree that microfiche and video tape should be considered, how about the government output being sensed, sorted and organized by a computer?

How about a government managed, on-line information system? This ultimately suggests the question: what is government's role? I don't think I know the answers. I do suggest these are very, very important questions. I am sort of of two minds. Sometimes, lets deal with this issue in this context or perhaps this is an opportunity to consider it in the broader context. Steve, what would you say, would you like it if a new piece of hardware were required, a new production mechanism? What about computer tape? What about video tape?

McCarthy: Well, Jeff, let me suggest: Why don't we let the generations intervene? About 1932 or 1933 I heard speeches to the effect that our libraries would consist of microfilm and that there would be no paper. It's now 1971 - and the Public Printer has become aware of microform. Give us another 40 years and we'll move on to another media and in another 40 years, we'll move to still another.

Powell: One of the problems in addressing that question is that the Public Printer is not addressing that problem.

McCarthy: Now the census tapes can be bought by anyone who has the money. So, some government information is available on computer tapes. The depositories' items are determined by the GPO. Census tapes don't go to them. There is an interesting development here. In years past, the results of the census came out in print and were available to depository libraries. The 1970 census is not being fully published in print. You can buy the tape or go without. So

we now have the latest and most complete and exhaustive census we have ever had and it is on the most modern communications media and yet it is not available.

Adler: Somebody is going to take those tapes, run them through a COM and issue them in a microform and they'll take up less space.

McCarthy: There are several entrepreneurs who are already offering this.

Adler: And indeed, the economy will be better off than 10 years ago. Despite the fact that you will have to lay out some money. This is my point. The census bureau is in many ways a modern agency in regard to ..

McCarthy: Oh, no, no, no.

Adler: I don't want to debate with you on the census bureau. I'll put it another way. They are more aware of information needs than many other agencies.

McCarthy: They are not at all aware of the needs of academic research. Their whole program is geared to geographic and market research.

Powell: Well, even if our conversations tonight can be typified as talking to ourselves, the result has been a useful one and will be disseminated. It will certainly be brought to the attention of the Public Printer and to his Advisory Group. I thank you all very much.